

REMARKS

This Amendment is offered in response to the Office Action dated July 17, 2003. Claims 1-20 are presented for examination. Applicant notes that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 29, 2001 has been fully considered. The Official Draftsman has objected to the Drawings as being informal. The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Cook et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,727,950). The Examiner has also rejected Claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook et al. in view of Lannert et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,101,489). In response, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 17. Claims 1-20 remain for reconsideration. Formal drawings are being sent to the Official Draftsman under a separate cover, a copy of which are enclosed for the Examiner's convenience.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Cook et al. Cook et al. discloses a system and method for interactive, adaptive and individualized computer assisted instruction. The '950 system includes an agent for each student which adapts to its students and provides individualized guidance to the student and controls to the augmented computer assisted instructional materials. The instructional materials of the '950 system are augmented to communicate the student performance and the materials pedagogical characteristics to the agent to receive control from the agent. The content of the communication between the agent and the materials conforms to specify interfaced standards so the agent acts independently of the content of the particular materials. The agent can project using various input/output modalities integrated engaging in lifelike display. The '950 system can be implemented on the network so instruction can be delivered to distributed students.

Lannert et al. discloses in the '489 patent a system that provides a goal based learning system utilizing a rule based expert training system to provide a cognitive educational experience. This '489 system provides the user with a simulated environment that presents a business opportunity to understand and solve optimally. The stakes are noted in remedial educational materials presented dynamically to build

the necessary skills. The '489 system utilizes an artificial intelligence engine driving individualized and dynamic feedback with synchronized video and graphics used to simulate real world environment interactions. Multiple correct answers are integrated into the learning system to allow individualized learning experiences in which navigation through the system is at a pace controlled by the learner. A business model provides support for realistic activities and allows a user to experience real world consequences for decisions. The '489 system is architected around a time-based model to manage and control the system.

Both the '950 and '489 systems are directed towards computerized learning systems in which a student accesses material from a host system in a sequenced manner. These prior art systems are both dynamic in the sense that they lead the student on from one text section to the next. Some presentation is modified in the in dependence on the student's past performance for speed, accuracy, etc. There are also limits on remediation in the case of repeated error or hence offered asynchronously only after a relatively long period without an answer from the student.

As amended, the present application in claims 1, 7, 13, and 17 are characterized by the step of determining an advance of an interaction, a first likely to be referenced by the user. This additional limitation clearly distinguishes the present invention over the art applied by the Examiner in formulating his rejections. One of the characteristics of the present invention is the fact that the actions of the user in referencing system components is not predetermined in the sense of '950 and '489 systems. These prior art systems advance in a known sequence from step to step leading the student from one part of the course to the next. As such, there is no uncertainty as to that which will be addressed by the user of the system. It is a relatively simple for the computer to increment the substance and content of the instructions in data fields presented to the user. In contrast, the present invention, as characterized by the amended independent claims, now clearly provides for a method and system which presents help data to the user quickly with a minimum delay by determining, in advance, a likelihood that a user would be interacting with a particular program component and storing related help data in a second memory area whose access time is shorter than that of a first memory area.

This evaluative process avoids the pitfalls of the prior art in which either all help data was presented to the user without regard to a request, or help data was presented only after a specific request which led to delays in presentation to the user, as the help data was stored in a memory having a substantially long access time. The result was undesirable in either case. The present invention, however, provides for a determination by the system as to the likelihood that a program component would likely be referenced by the user prior to the user actually referencing that component. The criteria for making such a determination can include, for example, the elapsed time from when the user has accessed relevant help data. See pages 8 and 9 of the present specification.

As such, the system provided by the present invention then allows for the user to have quick access to relevant help information without undue burden on the resources of the system. Consequently, the combination of a second memory having an access time less than a first memory with a determination of that component which is most likely to be accessed by the user allows the present method and system to enjoy significant advantages over the prior art.

Each of the dependent claims rejected by the Examiner contain the limitations of the base claim as well as any intervening claims, and each further includes the respective limitations of that claim. For the reasons stated above, Cook et al. cannot anticipate or render obvious the invention as set forth in independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 17, nor does it anticipate or render obvious the invention of the independent claims as further limited by the respective limitations of the claims which depend therefrom.

The Examiner has rejected claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Cook et al. in view of Lannert. The teachings of Cook '950 and Lannert et al. '489 have been discussed hereinabove. In response, the Applicant has amended claim 12 to more clearly define the invention. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider his rejection of these claims.

The Examiner acknowledged that Cook does not disclose limitations set forth in claim 11 of each cache comprising a plurality of data structure fields and a plurality of data structure fields each for storing a component help data attribute. Lannert, as applied by the Examiner, does not support the obviousness rejection. The text reference by the Examiner, at column 43, simply shows that there are to be text fields that are interface objects which can be manipulated. This is in contrast with the data structure set forth in claim 11, as amended, that includes a data structure field for storing help identifiers corresponding to related components likely to be referenced. There is no hint or suggestion of a data structure which stores program components never mind one which has the structure set forth in claim 11, as amended.

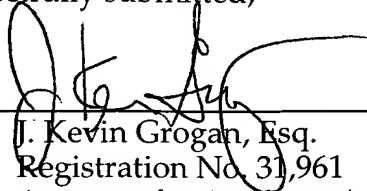
With regard to claim 12, the Examiner acknowledges that Cook does not disclose the limitation of component help data attribute which includes a help data identifier and help data. Here again, the cited text from Lannert et al. that the Examiner applies in formulating the obviousness rejection is simply the presentation by the '489 system of an algorithm that reads the cells of a spreadsheet and then provides the '489 agent with the appropriate information. There is no hint or suggestion either reference alone or taken together of the invention as set forth in independent claim 11 and dependent claim 12 characterized by data structure field for storing help data identifiers corresponding to related components likely to be referenced.

For all the reasons noted above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner of reconsideration and allowance of the presently pending claims. Applicant notes that the references cited by the Examiner but not applied in formulating the rejection are less material than either Lannert et al. or Cook et al.

No fees are considered to be due with the filing of this Response; however, if it is determined that payment of a fee is required, please charge our Deposit Account No. 13-0235.

Respectfully submitted,

By



J. Kevin Grogan, Esq.
Registration No. 31,961
Attorney for Applicant(s)

McCORMICK, PAULDING & HUBER LLP
CityPlace II, 185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103-4102
Tel: (860) 549-5290
Fax: (413) 733-4543